

Letter from Louis Hicks to Alexander Graham Bell, September 13, 1907

Louis Hicks, TELEPHONE No. 6511 CORTLANDT. Counsellor at Law and Proctor in Admiralty, Corporation, Patent and General Law, 71 Nassau Street, corner John Street , TELEPHONE No. 6511 CORTLANDT. New York, N. Y. Sept. 13, 1907. Prof. Alexander Graham Bell, Beinn Bhreagh, Near Baddeck, Nova Scotia. Dear Sir:

I beg to thank you for your favor of September 5, in reply to my letter of August 28. I have read with much interest the Volta Laboratory Description deposited in the Smithsonian Institution October 20, 1881, wherein you and your associates describe the cutting of lateral or zigzag records in the surface of a wax disc, and stating that a phonogram of either the vertical or lateral kind may be copied in more durable material by any of the well known moulding or electro-plating processes. Of course, in your lecture published in Science on May 25, 1888, you were merely stating again and illustrating the statements previously made in 1881. It has been asserted that Mr. Berliner invented the lateral record and the copying of the same by the electro-plating process, but with the exception of Mr. Berliner's etched record, it would seem that the work done by you and your associates anticipated Mr. Berliner by several years, especially as to making and copying original wax records of vertical and of lateral undulations. Others subsequent to Berliner have made claim to duplicates of lateral, disc, wax records made by the electro-plating process and I have recently been interested in these questions in connection with the Berliner and other patents.

If you could spare to me a few minutes of your time, I should be very much indebted to you because I know that you could give me very definite information. Possibly you may be in New York when returning from Nova Scotia, or if not in New York, then in Washington, within a short time. I am much interested in the models illustrating the disc form of record

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and the process of multiplying the records by means of electrotypes and pressure. No doubt the models illustrate the lateral as well as the vertical disc form of record mentioned in the Volta Laboratory Description of 1881. Possibly you could give me a note to Mr. C. J. Bell of Washington, and if you will let me know when you will probably be in New York or Washington, I shall much appreciate your courtesy.

Very truly yours, Louis Hicks P. S. I send a carbon copy of this letter to Washington since you might have left Nova Scotia.